

NEWS RELEASE



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**For Immediate Release
September 29, 2006**

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DRUG TRAFFICKER SENTENCED IN FEDERAL COURT TO 30 YEARS IMPRISONMENT

Man distributed dozens of kilograms of crack over 12 years

Lake Charles, Louisiana . . . EDDIE JAMES SUTTON, age 30, from Lake Charles, Louisiana was sentenced yesterday in federal court by United States District Judge Patricia Minaldi to 360 months (30 years) federal imprisonment to be followed by 10 years supervised release for conspiracy to possess and distribute controlled substances, announced United States Attorney Donald W. Washington. SUTTON was indicted in March 2005 and pled guilty to the charge in February 2006. This case is the result of investigations into a major drug distribution and trafficking conspiracy known as "Operation Broken Bridge" under the federal Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF) program.

SUTTON conspired with others to distribute crack cocaine in Lake Charles, Louisiana and elsewhere. At the time of his arrest, SUTTON was charged with possessing and distributing over 500 grams of crack cocaine. SUTTON is believed to have distributed over 144 kilos of crack cocaine in the Lake

Charles area over a 12-year time frame. He has prior felony convictions for drug trafficking, simple robbery, and vehicular homicide.

Agencies participating in the investigation and prosecution of individuals under “Operation Broken Bridge” include the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Western District of Louisiana and the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Safe Streets Task Force, which includes the Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office and the Lake Charles Police Department. The two- year investigation resulted in part from the Lake Charles Police Department’s concern over the growing narcotics activity in the Progressive Street area of the city.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges and the governing statute. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Todd Clemons.

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